

Message Text

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73

ACTION EB-11

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1022

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD GATT EC IT

SUBJECT: GATT ARTICLE XXIV:6 NEGOTIATIONS - KRAFT PAPER

REF: (A) EC BRUSSELS 5349; (B) STATE 169850

1. DURING SEPTEMBER 26 CALL ON MINISTER OF INDUSTRY DE MITA, AMBASSADOR VOLPE AND ECMIN DISCUSSED GATT ARTICLE XXIV:6 NEGOTIATIONS WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ITALIAN RESERVATION ON COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL ON KRAFT PAPER.

2. DE MITA SAID STUDIES CONDUCTED BY HIS MINISTRY INDICATED THAT DUTY-FREE EC TARIFF QUOTA FOR KRAFT PAPER OF MORE THAN 400,000 TONS WOULD RESULT IN FALL IN PRICES WITHIN EC TO POINT WHERE ITALIAN PRODUCERS, ALL OF WHICH TOTALLY DEPENDENT UPON HIGH-PRICED IMPORTED SCANDANAVIAN PULP, WOULD BE SERIOUSLY DAMAGED. HIS MINISTRY HAD THEREFORE INSISTED ON MAXIMUM TARIFF QUOTA OF 400,000 TONS RATHER THAN 700,000 TONS PROPOSED BY COMMISSION.

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3. AMBASSADOR REMINDED THE MINISTER OF THE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF A RAPID SATISFACTORY CONCLUSION TO XXIV:6 NEGOTIATIONS AND STRESSED THAT KRAFT PAPER WAS OF PRIME IMPORTANCE TO US.

4. DE MITA INDICATED HE UNDERSTOOD IMPORTANCE OF XXIV:6 NEGOTIATIONS AND THE SIGNIFICANCE US ATTACHES TO KRAFT PAPER AND WOULD INSTRUCT MINISTRY EXPERTS TO REEXAMINE CALCULATIONS AND FORECAST.

5. COMMENT. ABOVE "REEXAMINATION" IS NOT AT ALL LIKELY TO RESULT IN GOI WILLINGNESS ACCEPT EC QUOTA ANYWHERE NEAR 1,500,000 TONS. IT WOULD BE REAL PROGRESS IF GOI COULD ACCEPT COMMISSION'S ORIGINAL PROPOSAL (700,000 TONS). EMBASSY WILL FOLLOW UP WITH APPROPRIATE MINISTRY INDUSTRY OFFICIALS. ANY MATERIAL WHICH COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY TO COUNTER GOI ARGUMENTS PARA (2) ABOVE WOULD BE WELCOMED. VOLPE

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